



William Mandeville Ellis L'ESTRANGE

AMIEAust, MIEE, FCIS Lond

1868-1951
INDUCTED IN 2021



William L'Estrange, electrical engineer and administrator, was born on 11 December 1868 in Dublin. Educated at Arnold House (Chester, England), William emigrated to Queensland in 1886 where he worked as an assistant to the surveyor C. D. Dunne in 1887-93 before being employed by a relation, E. G. C. Barton, senior partner of Barton, White & Co. (later the Brisbane Electric Supply Co. Ltd and from 1904 the City Electric Light Co. Ltd).

William studied electrical engineering in London and at Cologne, Germany, and gained professional experience in the United States of America.

Appointed secretary of Barton's firm in 1900, L'Estrange became its joint-manager and engineer in 1912, going on to Chair the Queensland State Repatriation Board from 1915-1920. Beginning with the City Electric Light Co. Ltd in 1917 as a secretary, William rose to Managing Director in 1927 and eventually Chairman in 1933.

His wise and conservative leadership ensured that his companies were well placed to meet the increasing demand for electricity. Granted leave of absence in 1935, he retired in 1938.

L'Estrange had been a member of the Queensland Electrical Association and President (1911) of the Queensland Institute of Engineers (QIE). As a member of a committee formed by the QIE in 1914 to consider schemes for improved road construction and as President of the (Royal) Automobile Club of Queensland (1915-16), he proposed the formation of a department of highways to control road-making. He also advocated a change in legislation to allow the reticulation of electricity supply by overhead rather than underground mains.

From 1933-34 William was the Chairman of the Institution of Engineers Australia's Queensland Division, also serving as a representative on the Great Barrier Reef Committee. He was a member (1913) of the Institution of Electrical Engineers and a Fellow (1919) of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries, London.